

Let's Talk About It: 365-1-8-29-1,000, 40%. Breast Cancer and me. A Free Virtual Breast Cancer Tutu Tea

For many in the African American community breast cancer is what I would classify as an "unspeakable". On October 30, 2021 we break the chains of silence.

LEESBURG, VA, UNITED STATES, October 18, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, and for most of the world, that means lots of pink ribbons and images of smiling women with their arms around their survivor sisters. For others it's a sense of returning to the scene of a crime of the feeling of a death sentence knowing you have breast cancer.

*1 in 8 women and 1 in 1,000 men will receive a breast cancer diagnosis in the United States.

*Breast cancer is more than 31 days in October: it's 365 days of the year.

*Every 29 seconds, a woman is receiving a breast cancer diagnosis.

“

When you change the way you look at things the things you look at change.”

Dr. Wayne Dyer

*African American women are 40% more likely to die from breast cancer and twice as likely to die if they are 50 or older.

*Research indicates that African American women are 30% more likely to be diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer.

For survivors, breast cancer is more than just 31 days in October and "pretty in pink." It is tears, frustration, and anger. It is sleepless nights and sick days. It subjects you to an endless parade of doctors and nurses that treat you like a science experiment. It is swallowing your pride and



The poster is for a "Virtual Breast Cancer Tutu Tea" event. It features a pink background with a pattern of pink hearts and ribbons. Text on the poster includes: "Virtual Breast Cancer Tutu Tea", "THIS IS A FREE EVENT", "Theme: 'See Something Feel Something Say Something'", "October 30, 2021 9:00am - 10:30am (EST)", "Register at: <https://bcmf-tutu-tea.eventbrite.com>", "PayPal Scan, Pay, Go.", "DONATE!", "SPECIAL GIFTS FOR BREAST CANCER PATIENTS AND SURVIVORS THAT ATTEND THE EVENT", "HOSTED BY: TANJA S. THOMPSON 2X BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR FOUNDER: BREAST CANCER MOVE FOUNDATION A 501C3", and "www.breastcancerbugsmem.com". There is also a photo of three women in tutus standing next to a pink car with a sign that says "Fight Cancer! Breast Cancer Move Found BreastCancerBugsMe.com".

Free Virtual Breast Cancer Tutu Tea. Register to attend and show up in your tutu. The breast cancer beetle bug car makes an appearance at Fort Belvoir Community Military Hospital.

showing up no matter how scared you are. It is putting your life on hold while you fight an exhausting battle for your life. It is lonely. It is depressing. For many, it's a sentence of death. It is spiritual, awe-inspiring, and life-changing.

As a strong and proud, black woman who spent 25 years in the Air Force, I knew I could handle anything. And while that is true, my breast cancer diagnosis tested that theory. I sunk into the darkness of depression as I raged against the devastation that was invading my well-structured life. It took my family to the brink of needing counseling and the dirty 4-letter word where we were too proud to ask for HELP. Our children suffer the worse. But before the darkness could overcome me and take my family down the rabbit hole of despair, I remembered what my grandmother, Willie Mae Harris said, "hold onto what you got, and let the rest of it go." I referenced my grandmother in my TEDx talk, "From Triumph to Tragedy" her words became my mantra as I walked through my journey on the way to becoming a breast cancer thriver.

In 2004 just 14 months prior to my 2005 diagnosis, I had a clear baseline mammogram—no signs of breast cancer. Fast forward to a little over a year later, and the devastation was unbelievable. Cancer had spread throughout both breasts by May 2005; I had HER2+ IDIS, an aggressive form of breast cancer. Within 30 days from my diagnosis, I was under the knife having a double mastectomy. I was only 42



Captain even decided to get into the mode and wear his tutu



African American women are 40% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women in the U.S.

years old. In 2010 it was different; I had HER2+ and Estrogen+ breast cancer. Since it was a recurrence, I had surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. Early detection saved my life.

For many black women, that is not the case. Many black women don't have the resources and ability to take action for their health. There have been too many avoidable deaths of black women due to a lack of resources, awareness, early detection, with one of the leading reasons a mistrust of health professionals.

For instance, Henrietta Lacks, in 1951, was diagnosed with cervical cancer at John Hopkins Hospital, one of the few hospitals that would treat poor people of color. Upon examining her cancer tissue cells, doctors immediately recognized their unique density to replicate every 20 to 24 hours. As her tissue cells helped so many others, she died of an aggressive form of cervical cancer that year; she was only 31 years of age. Without her consent or acknowledgment, her cells were distributed and used within the medical and scientific community. Her cells, nicknamed "HeLa" cells, are being used to treat cancer, toxins, effects of radiation, and as of recent, the COVID-19 vaccine. In any cancer, early detection is paramount. It saved my life twice. Having better treatment and access to healthcare can help a woman detect the presence of breast cancer at an early stage.

For many women, a breast cancer diagnosis is shameful, fearful, frightful, and disgraceful. We feel guilty and wonder what we did to have brought cancer onto our bodies and more specifically our breast. We feel embarrassed as we face the perceived loss of our femininity, breast, and hair as the disease ravages our bodies, bones, and mental being. We were wrong! We didn't bring cancer on ourselves - it is indiscriminate and attacks the healthiest of people. And we certainly are not losing our femininity - there is nothing more beautiful than the inner strength that shines through when a woman fights for her life.

This year the [Breast Cancer Move Foundation](#) is hosting a "FREE" [Virtual Breast Cancer Tutu Tea](#), Saturday, October 30, 2021, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am (EST).

This year's theme is "Feel Something, See Something, Say Something."

With the generous donation of our sponsors, the event host is providing gifts to breast cancer survivors and patients that attend the entire event. Of course, Donations are always welcome.

The Breast Cancer Move Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization.

I'm a very optimistic person. I like to dream of an America where everyone has equal access to any opportunities regardless of color & race. As I question myself every day, I ponder am I doing enough to educate men and women on breast cancer, I see a ray of hope in the form of the answer. A hope that keeps me alive. A hope that constantly pushes me forward to fight for breast cancer equality, being a voice for women like Henrietta Lacks, whose voice was muted.

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